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1935

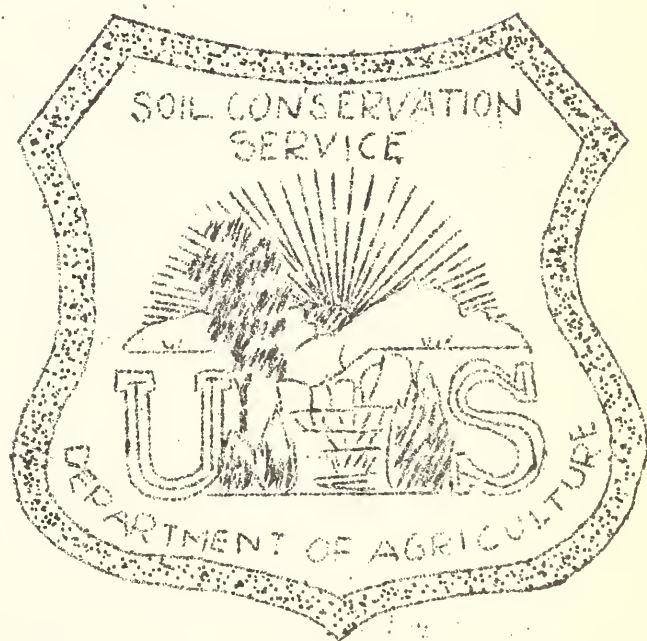
# BANISTER RIVER BANNER

PROJECT 22 DANVILLE, VIRGINIA

BANISTER RIVER AREA

PITTSYLVANIA CO

PITTSYLVANIA & HENRY CO



SANDY RIVER AREA

## TO THE FARMERS OF SANDY RIVER AREA

This is to remind you that the fall seeding season is here and that you should be getting your land in shape for sowing hay and pasture grasses as soon as possible. The engineers from the Soil Conservation Service are now getting the farm boundaries and the soils men are mapping the soils. Within the next few days the contact men will be around to help you plan a good system for your farm and to get the permanent agreement signed. The seed allotted to you by the S.C.S. and the seed you buy should be sown as soon as possible. Fall sown seed usually do much better in this area than seed which are sown in the spring. It is to your advantage, therefore, to get all your hay and pasture grasses sown during the fall seeding season, if possible. The land should be prepared as thoroughly as possible to insure a good stand. Both hay and pasture sods usually are left on the fields two or more years, and if the seed bed is not well prepared the resulting sods are weak and unprofitable.

If the seeds are to be sown after corn or some other clear cultivated crop, a thorough disking followed by a drag harrow or smoothing harrow after the seeds are sown will usually put the land in good shape. Idle land or land which is covered with filth should be fallowed and then smoothed with a drag harrow. Both the hay and pasture grasses can be seeded with wheat or other small grain. Don't delay your seed bed preparations. Be ready to take advantage of as many of the fall rains as possible.

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"To scoff at disaster is courageous; to preserve the home is patriotic; to devise a plan to meet the unexpected with deliberate preparation is genius; to make large payments from small ones is capital; and to provide for posterity, so that your children and your children's children will not have to eke out an existence from eroded and badly gullied hillsides is foresight; and the name of the scheme whereby it all may be done is: Soil Erosion Control."

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"Don't throw mud. It becomes dust and blows back on you". Help put over the Soil Erosion Control Program in your community. To work against it gets you nothing, and in future years when the dust from your eroded farm is blowing on you, your cooperating neighbor will be wading through his alfalfa and clover.

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The Regional Office for the Soil Conservation Service of Virginia has been moved to Danville, Virginia, and is located in the Old Southern Railway Building. The telephone number is 690.

The Banister River Area will be administered from Chatham, Virginia, and the telephone number is 150.

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The recently completed Trainee Course, which began in June, 1935, has furnished us with a large number of men from whom many were selected for the camp personnel of the newly established SCS Camps in Virginia.



Landlord-Tenant Agreement in Relation to Soil Conservation

Farming is not a one year business beginning and ending January first each year. Land to produce profit must be conserved and usually the benefits of various conservation work, whether the result of engineering or vegetative changes, lasts for several years. Does the agreement make it possible for both the landlord and tenant to benefit from a farming program which to be effective must be planned for at least five years in the future? Maintaining the fertility of the soil and the prevention of erosion require a certain amount of expenditure in labor, lime, seed, fertilizers and other materials. Who shall be responsible for these and to what extent according to your agreement? It takes time for a tenant to become acquainted with the possibilities of a farm and its soils. Would he not be more interested in keeping up the farm if he were certain of a longer than one year tenure and had in addition a long time program worked out for his own as well as his landlords benefit?

Patch Farming or Controlled Field Boundaries

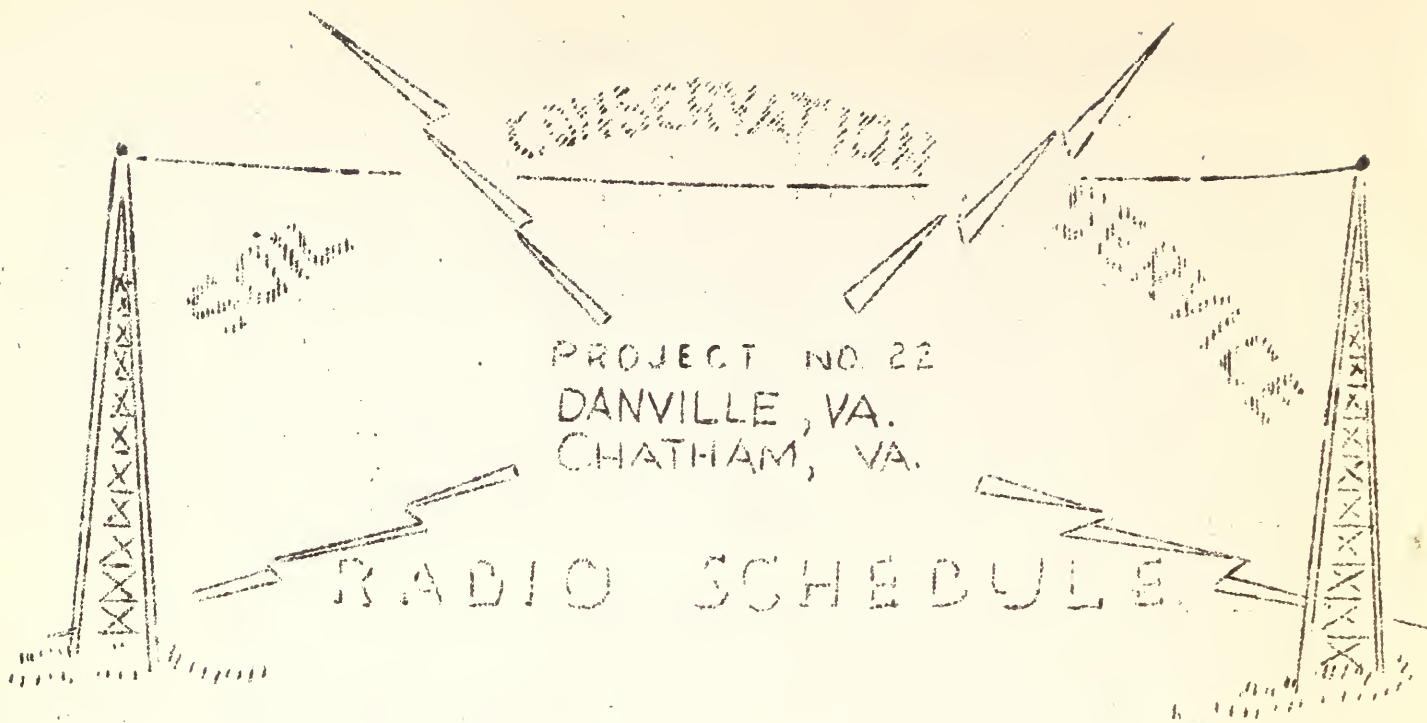
Tobacco or corn with scrub-pine growth in the field is responsible for much of the patch farming seen today. With this practice of soil exploitation the area of the farm that can be used for crops gradually decreases in size. Now the practice of putting row crops on land only once every three years has made it necessary for many farmers to find more land so that there may be the same amount of acreage in each crop every year. This needed extra acreage, some farmers are showing us, is easily obtained by clearing away the unprofitable pines and otherwise reclaiming idle land through terracing and control of drainage with meadow strip or other forms of water spreaders. Of course, it is not advisable to reclaim very poor or what is termed sub-marginal land. This type should be planted to economical kinds and varieties of trees.

Fields having regular outlines are in every way more easily managed than irregular patches whether one is planning rotations that give nearly equal acreage each year in the different crops or doing the various jobs necessary in making the crops. Regularly shaped fields or fields formed on contour lines also make it possible to utilize equipment more effectively thereby reducing effort and cost of production.

The effect on the appearance of the farm through establishing regularly shaped fields and the clearing away of patches here and there of scrub-pines and bushes is striking and will no doubt add much to the value of the land as well as pleasure to the farmer living there.

Slogan For August - Watch Those Terraces

The torrential thunder showers that we have had in some sections of the Banister River Area recently have left some silt deposits in the terrace channels. Unless this silt is removed disastrous results will follow. The channel will overflow and cause the terrace banks to break and wash a gully to the next terrace channel. Take a little time now to examine your terrace channels and putlots. Remove the silt with a shovel or drag pan. A few hours labor now may save you many tons of fertile and valuable top soil.



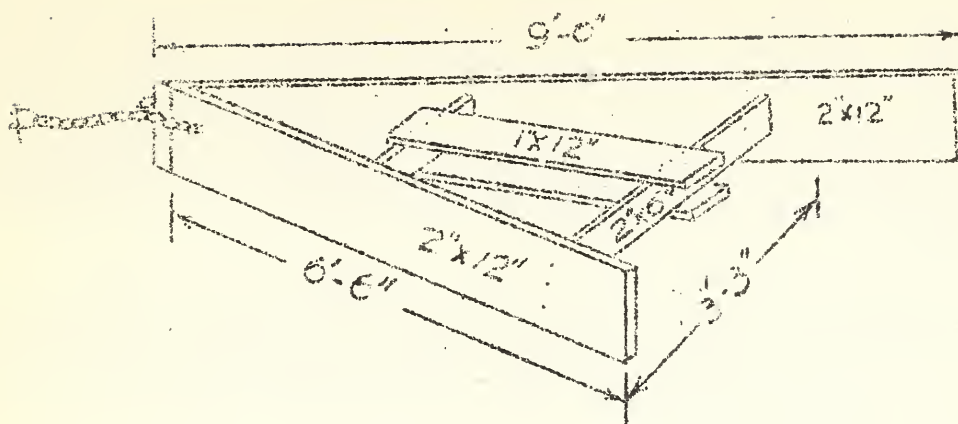
STATION W.B.T.M., DANVILLE, VA., FARM BULLETIN HOUR 1:00 P. M.

- August 6, 1935 - "The Farmer and Erosion Control", by  
A. M. Moore, Agricultural Aide.
- August 13, 1935 - "Terracing Control of Erosion, by  
W. S. Fields, Agricultural Aide.
- August 20, 1935 - "The Future of Livestock in Soil Conservation  
Areas", by J. R. Munchmeyer, Erosion Dep't.
- August 27, 1935 - "Forest Trees as Soil Indicators", by  
C. B. Lively, Junior Forester.

STATION W. R. V. A., RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, - 2:30 to 2:45 P. M.

- August 1, 1935 - "Forest Deterioration and Erosion Control",  
by L. T. Small, Junior Forester.
- August 8, 1935 - "Farmers Questions and Answers", by  
H. L. Dunton, Ass't. Erosion Specialist.
- August 15, 1935 - "Erosion Control and the Silting of Reservoirs",  
by John A. Smart, Ass't. Erosion Specialist.
- August 22, 1935 - "Soil Erosion, Dust Storms and Floods", by  
T. C. Green, Soil Expert.
- August 29, 1935 - "Farm Plan and Erosion Control", by  
Walter R. Reynolds, Agricultural Aide.

## ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT



V-DRAG FOR CLEANING CHANNEL

The home made V-drag is used a great deal for cleaning out terrace channels. It is not expensive and can be easily constructed.

After a terraced field has been plowed the drag should be run in the water channel until channel is smoothed out. Always run the drag so that the loose dirt is thrown toward the ridge. It is also important that the drag be run in the channel after plowing and before harrowing, because, if the drag is used after harrowing the bottom of the channel will be left bare of top soil. The use of this drag will be very beneficial in maintaining a smooth and effective terrace. If at any time through cultivation of row crops, the terrace channel becomes clogged, it is well to run the drag in the channel to clean it.

The following simple suggestions, if followed, will aid in the maintenance of terracing:

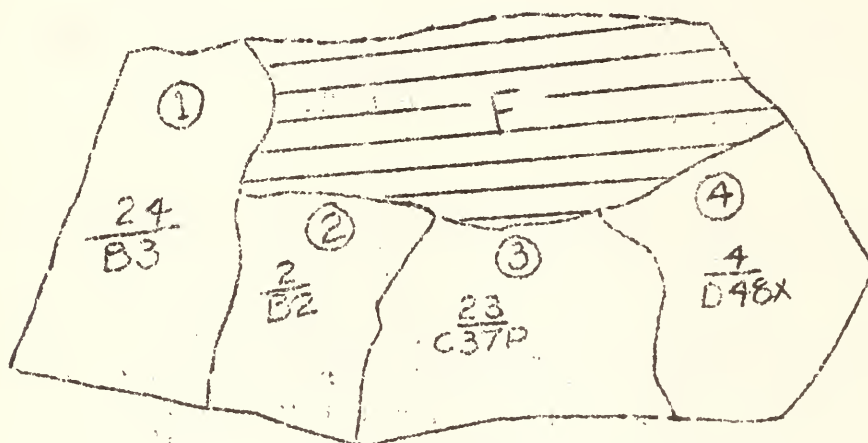
1. Inspect terraces after each heavy rain. With a shovel a man can repair weak or broken places which might have occurred. Also remove any soil deposits in the channel.
2. Terraces should not be plowed or cultivated across. Always plow and cultivate with the terrace.
3. After plowing, run V-drag or disc harrow in the channel to clean it.
4. Do not let terrace outlet become clogged with trash.



## SOILS DEPARTMENT

Every farmer who has signed a Cooperative Agreement with the SCS has received a survey map of his farm, showing the location of the various types of soils found on the farm, the degree of slope found in the field, the extent of erosion (soil removed), gullying, and whether the field is cultivated, idle, in brush or in pasture. A pamphlet was also furnished to the farmer, together with the map. This pamphlet contains the legend which is necessary for interpretation of the symbols on the farm map.

A portion of a farm survey map, for explanation purposes, is drawn below. The soil types, degree of slope, the extent of erosion and etc., are shown in the different areas. The different areas are indicated on the map by encircled numbers.



How to Interpret Symbols:

Symbols above line always indicate type of soil.

Symbols below line indicate the following, in order: (1) Degree of slope (2) extent of erosion (3) land under cover. Absence of the last letter below the line indicates that the area is in cultivation.

Tract 1 : 24 = Cecil Clay Loam, B = 3 to 7% slope, 3 = 25 to 75% surface soil removed, cultivated.

Tract 2 : 2 = Appling Sandy Loam, B = 3 to 7% slope, 2 = less than 25% surface removed, cultivated.

Tract 3 : 23 = Cecil Sandy Loam, mixed phase, C = 7 to 12% slope, 7 = occasional shallow gullies, P = pasture.

Tract 4 : 4 = Wilkes Sandy Loam, D = Over 12% slope, 4 = over 75% surface soil removed, X = idle land.

Tract 5 : Forest.



## AGRONOMY DEPARTMENT

### Summer Seeding of Grass and Clover

Many of our cooperators have already begun a good system of crop rotation through the use of lespedeza sown on small grain this spring. There are yet many fields, however, on which no definite crop rotation has been established.

The month of August is usually the best time to sow grass and clover mixtures, and should be sown after the first good season. In preparing the seed bed on land following small grain, it is not necessary to fallow unless the land has become very weedy. A thorough discing and harrowing is usually sufficient to give a firm seed bed. If plowing is necessary, care should be taken to see that the seed are not sown until the land has been worked into a good seed bed and the land thoroughly settled.

One of the chief causes for failure in growing clover is the lack of sufficient lime. If clover is being sown on land that has not been limed during the past five years, at least two tons of ground limestone, or its equivalent, should be used per acre. Unless the land is exceptionally fertile, 300 or 400 pounds of high grade fertilizer should be used at the time of seeding. If fertilizer can not be used, a good top dressing of barnyard manure may be substituted with excellent results.

It is usually advisable to sow a mixture consisting of 10 pounds timothy, 8 pounds sapling clover, and 4 pounds red top. If for any reason a good stand of clover is not secured, 10 pounds of korean lespedeza may be added around the first of March, with good results.

### RAINFALL IN AREA DURING JULY

Transient Camp - - - - -	4.22 inches	Jones' Mill - - - - -	3.80 in.
Bryant's Store (Dry Fork) - -	3.50 "	Sheva - - - - -	6.80 "
Fitzgerald's Store (Shockoe) -	3.25 "	Arnn's Store - - - - -	5.38 "
Walker's Store - - -		8.09 inches.	

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### SOIL CONSERVATION NURSERY

In the July issue of the Banister River Banner, mention was made of the Soil Conservation Nursery at Gretna. At the present time we have approximately 1½ million Black Locust seedlings, ranging from 10 inches to 2 feet tall, and 25,000 Kudzu vine plants, growing in this nursery. Both Black Locust and Kudzu are excellent soil improvers and will be of great benefit to badly eroded lands in this section.

If at any time it is possible for you to visit this nursery, Mr. Arthur Dugdale, our nursery foreman, will be very glad to show you around.

## SOUTHERN AGRONOMISTS VISIT BANISTER RIVER WATERSHED

Much interest was shown by Agronomists from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, West Virginia, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia and other southern states, who visited the Banister River Area on Friday, August 9, 1935. Approximately fifty Agronomists and Fertilizer Representatives inspected some of the work, such as terraces, outlet channels, contour tillage, reforestation, forest thinning, pasture seeding and improvement, strip rotation, meadow strips, and other phases of the completed work.

The importance and practicability of such a program was voiced by the group. The Soil Conservation Service appreciated the opportunity of showing this group some of the work.

The group visited the experiment stations in Virginia, under the supervision of Mr. T. B. Hutcheson, Agronomist, V. P. I., Blacksburg, Va.

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The division of the Albemarle County Terracing Association, accompanied by Mr. T. O. Scott, County Agricultural Agent, visited the Banister River Area Wednesday, August 14th for the purpose of familiarizing themselves with the various phases of soil erosion control.

A member of the Soil Conservation Service Staff accompanied the group on a tour of the area, explaining the purpose and possibilities of the demonstrations of terracing, terrace outlets, meadow strips, contour furrows, forest planting, and strip cropping in erosion control.

The group was keenly interested in the work being carried on in this area. We hope that their short visit here will be of some benefit to them in promoting and expanding erosion control work in Albemarle County.

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A group of farmers from Amelia County, accompanied by Mr. J. A. Waller, Agricultural Engineer from V. P. I., visited the Banister River Area on August 9th. They were shown to points on the area where various phases of soil conservation practices are being followed. At each of these places the work was explained by members of the Staff, giving in detail the benefits derived from each phase of the work.

These men seemed very much interested in the work of the Soil Conservation Service, and asked numerous questions regarding individual problems on their farms.

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A group of interested farmers from the Molly Creek Camp Area in Campbell County visited this project Tuesday, August 20, 1935. These men, accompanied by J. C. Johnson, Camp Superintendent, and other members of the Camp Staff, inspected erosion control demonstrations in this area, many of which they expect to put in practice in the Molly Creek Area. Heavy rains during the day enabled the farmers to observe the practicability of the demonstrations.

## FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

### Rodent Control and Wild Life Conservation

According to Mr. George B. Lay, Junior Biologist, U. S. Bureau of Biological Survey, Raleigh, N. C., who recently visited this area, there is no need for rodent control work on this project; but what problems may arise in the future, no one can predict.

As cover is provided to stop erosion and also provide food for upland birds, problems may arise, calling for rodent control work. Where honey-suckle is used to any extent, the field mice problem may become acute, unless snakes and hawks are given enough protection to keep the mice down to natural numbers. Where the beneficial hawks and owls are allowed to breed naturally, and where the so-called "Blue Darters", the Cooper's Hawk and the Spark-Shinned Hawk, are killed off by farmers and game wardens, the rodents of the fields and woods will be pretty well kept under control. Most of our hawks are beneficial because of their habit of feeding on insects, rodents, snakes and other animals of little or no economic importance, even though they are destructive to upland game birds and insectivorous birds.

Where the ground is covered with cover crops, of course the rodent problem might be expected to increase in severity. However, this does not always prove to be the case, as nature has a way of increased control animals along with the animals on which such hosts feed. Where cover and feed are supplied in increased quantities for quail and other game upland birds, rodents and snakes more than likely will increase also. However, by protecting beneficial hawks, by controlling the two species of hawks which are largely harmful by giving absolute protection to all owls, the increased numbers of quail may be maintained, unless over-shooting is indulged in. This last sentence shows, in itself, what problems and what inter-relations there are in this project, known as Wild Life Conservation. Besides the factors, mentioned above, snakes enter as another problem. Where rodents increase, snakes will naturally become more numerous, with the long-term result that nature will allow the snakes to cut down the number of rodents; and this result might be expected to occur without the aid of hawks and owls. The ideal situation is protection for upland birds and game animals from their natural enemies, so as to aid them in increasing in numbers and so as to keep down their natural enemies. As a result of the many factors involved, Wild Life Conservation has become a study for many Conservationists over our nation; and the work of conservation of wild life is now an integral part of the problems of Soil Conservation as we now understand the term.

Wild Life Conservation is a big subject with men at the heads of Soil Conservation projects and one that demands expert advice and assistance, along with the problems of returning to usefulness of many thousands of farms. Starting out a few years ago, as a brand new idea, Soil Conservation work is feeling it's way, so to speak; and the outlook is that such work will benefit the nation many times over the cost of the work, when viewed over a period of years.



## CAMP NEWS

### CAMP SCS-VA-1, CHATHAM, VA.

The S.C.S. "Mountaineers" Orchestra of Camp No. 1 entertained a social gathering at the farm of D. L. Mitchell on the evening of August 1st. The popularity of the six piece orchestra--violin, mandolin, two guitars and two jugs, is attested by the fact that it has been engaged twice a week during the month of July.

Word has just been received that Frank Sass, ex-enrollee and Leader at SCS-VA-1, has been recently appointed to the position of Junior Foreman in a Soil Conservation Service Camp in Pennsylvania.

During the month of July, the Supervisory Personnel of Camp No. 1 has been engaged in training engineers and foremen for eleven additional S.C.S. Camps which will be established in the State in the very near future.

### CAMP SCS-VA-2, DANVILLE, VA.

CCC Company 1227 entertained a large crowd of friends from the surrounding community, and Danville, Saturday afternoon, July 20th. The occasion was the Company's annual field day. There were several very closely contested boxing bouts during the afternoon which provided the spectators with a number of thrills. One of the most interesting contests was a barrel boxing contest, in which the contestants stood in large barrels and attempted to fight as in a regular boxing contest. There were also other comical contests, field events, and music by Bob Hall's Orchestra.

The Company gave a farewell dance the evening of July 27th. The camp dining room was very attractively decorated for the occasion. A large crowd of guests were present to enjoy dancing to the delightful music of Billy Groff's Orchestra. Refreshments were served from the Company kitchen.

Lt. Sickles, the Commanding Officer, and the Company were ordered to move to Williamstown, New York. They entrained at 7:30 P. M., August 8th for the long journey to their home state. We are expecting a new company soon to take their place here.

### CAMP SCS-VA-3, ROCKY MOUNT, VA.

During the latter part of July, CCC Company No. 2347 arrived from the State of Pennsylvania, and was welcomed to the Old Dominion by the Town of Rocky Mount. They loaded on trucks and traveled northward on U. S. Route 220 to their camp site, located in the Little Creek Watershed, Franklin County. Here they pitched their tents and ere the sun went down had a well organized camp.

Barracks for the CCC men are progressing nicely. All buildings are now under construction. The Company Mess Hall is ready to be occupied, however, water is not yet available. The well has been completed, and pipe is now on the ground for the water mains. Ground is being cleared, grubbed and graded for the buildings to be occupied by the Technical Service. Construction is expected to begin in the near future.

August 11th, a meeting of the farmers of Franklin County was held in the Company Mess Hall, at which time the Franklin County Soil Conservation Association was organized. This meeting was attended by about forty farmers from over the entire County, who were very enthusiastic and outspoken in their support of the Soil Conservation Program.



CAMP SCS-VA-4, RIDGEWAY, VA.

We find the farmers in the Marrowbone Watershed to be greatly interested in our program, and with their assistance we have made rapid progress. Our office was opened August 10, and since then thirty agreements have been signed. Twenty-five farm maps have been made to date.

In connection with the farm maps, we wish to express our appreciation to Mr. Mathews, Clerk of the Court, and to Mr. H. A. Ford of Martinsville.

A Volunteer Soil Conservation Association has been organized by the farmers, and they are very active in forwarding our work. They are very much interested in securing a terracing unit.

The camp buildings are nearly completed and the boys expect to move in soon. Foundations for S.C.S. buildings have been laid out and construction started.

We have a splendid type of CCC enrollee, and they are willing and anxious to work, which leaves them -- YOUNG AND HEALTHY.

CAMP SCS-VA-5, RUSTBURG, VA.

Company 2385 of the Civilian Conservation Corps moved into its new camp site on August 6th. This camp site is located on the U. S. Highway #501, about three miles southeast of the old historical town of Rustburg.

At present the enrollees are busy clearing up the camp site on which permanent quarters will be constructed. Until permanent structures are built the boys will be quartered in tents. This is an excellent group of boys, most of whom are Virginia born.

Thus far about 12 farmers have been contacted and their farms gone over very carefully. We find that there is a great need for Erosion Control in this section of Campbell County. Types of work located so far consists mostly of gully control work, building terrace outlets and outlet channels on farms that have been terraced by the local terracing unit. We find also a great need for pasture improvement.

In general we find that the farmers are very enthusiastic and interested in Soil Conservation Work and are cooperating with us to the fullest.

CAMP SCS-VA-6, CLOVER, VA.

August 5th marked the entrance of S.C.S. personnel in Camp No. 6, located on U. S. Highway 360, 1½ miles from Clover, Halifax County, Virginia. The camp buildings, of the portable type, are now being constructed. Temporary field headquarters were set up in a squad tent furnished by 1st. Lt. Peter T. Seaborn, Construction Officer.

The camp personnel is busy getting field work lined up, and educating our future cooperators as they go in soil conservation practices. It is hoped that they will be able to contact every farmer in the area before the enrollees are encamped. "Cap" Reynolds is now in the field with us, having arrived recently in camp. He will be with us for several weeks to sign up enough cooperators for the camp to start on. To date, forty-five farms, totaling 8,407 acres, have been contacted. Eighty gully heads, averaging about five feet in depth, have been located.

UNITED STATES

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

DANVILLE, VIRGINIA

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID

PAYMENT OF POSTAGE, \$300